

**SENATE . . . . . No. 2498**

**The Commonwealth of Massachusetts**

PRESENTED BY:

***Bruce E. Tarr***

*To the Honorable Senate and House of Representatives of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts in General Court assembled:*

The undersigned legislators and/or citizens respectfully petition for the adoption of the accompanying bill:

An Act to properly recognize Massachusetts merchant mariners, living and deceased, who served in an active war zone.

PETITION OF:

NAME:	DISTRICT/ADDRESS:	
<i>Bruce E. Tarr</i>	<i>First Essex and Middlesex</i>	
<i>Steven George Xiarhos</i>	<i>5th Barnstable</i>	<i>1/27/2025</i>
<i>Peter J. Durant</i>	<i>Worcester and Hampshire</i>	<i>3/17/2025</i>
<i>Patrick M. O'Connor</i>	<i>First Plymouth and Norfolk</i>	<i>3/17/2025</i>
<i>Patrick Joseph Kearney</i>	<i>4th Plymouth</i>	<i>3/21/2025</i>
<i>John J. Marsi</i>	<i>6th Worcester</i>	<i>9/29/2025</i>
<i>David Allen Robertson</i>	<i>19th Middlesex</i>	<i>10/1/2025</i>
<i>Michelle L. Badger</i>	<i>1st Plymouth</i>	<i>10/1/2025</i>
<i>John F. Keenan</i>	<i>Norfolk and Plymouth</i>	<i>10/6/2025</i>

**SENATE . . . . . No. 2498**

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By Mr. Tarr, a petition (accompanied by bill, Senate, No. 2498) of Bruce E. Tarr and Steven George Xiarhos for legislation to properly recognize merchant marine veterans. Veterans and Federal Affairs.

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[SIMILAR MATTER FILED IN PREVIOUS SESSION  
SEE SENATE, NO. 2688 OF 2023-2024.]

**The Commonwealth of Massachusetts**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**In the One Hundred and Ninety-Fourth General Court  
(2025-2026)**  
\_\_\_\_\_

An Act to properly recognize Massachusetts merchant mariners, living and deceased, who served in an active war zone.

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:*

1 SECTION 1. (a) Section 9 of Chapter 115 as appearing in the 2022 official edition is  
2 hereby amended by inserting at the end thereof the following: -

3 “In cemeteries containing the remains of veterans which contain a display of flags  
4 representing branches of United States military services such displays shall include the service  
5 flags of the following: Army, Navy, Marines, Coast Guard, Air Force, Space Force, and  
6 Merchant Marine.”

7 (b) Notwithstanding any general or special law to the contrary the superintendent of the  
8 state house shall install the flag of the United States Merchant Marine in memorial hall of the  
9 state house.

10 SECTION 2. Chapter 33 of the General Laws, as appearing in the 2022 Official Edition,  
11 is hereby amended by inserting after section 67B the following section: -

12 Section 67C. There shall be a Massachusetts Merchant Mariner medal to be presented to  
13 a Merchant Mariner who served in an active war zone. In order to be eligible a Merchant Mariner  
14 must have been a resident of the commonwealth of Massachusetts during said service and must  
15 have served after December 6, 1941. The requirements to receive the Massachusetts Merchant  
16 Mariner medal shall be the same as set forth by the U.S. Department of Transportation's  
17 requirements for Merchant Marine Medals and Decorations as prescribed in 46 CFR 350.4.

18 There shall be a commission, henceforth called the Merchant Mariner Medal  
19 Commission, comprised of the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, the commandant of the  
20 Massachusetts Maritime Academy, and a Merchant Mariner, who shall be appointed by the  
21 Governor from a list of 3 names provided by American Merchant Marine Association; further the  
22 person appointed by the Governor shall have or have had an unlimited tonnage or any  
23 horsepower USCG license. The Commission shall design the Merchant Mariner Medal and make  
24 recommendations to the commander-in-chief for the awarding of the Massachusetts Merchant  
25 Mariner Medal.